Positive Climate For Sexual Minority Groups

Sexual orientation

Most minorities do not disclose their sexual orientation at work for fear of negative repercussions. Player's parents also express high levels of sexual prejudice and some are unwilling to allow their children to be on the teams led by a coach who is LGBTQ.

LGBTQ are considered to be lacking moral fibre (eg less in ethics, morals, and trustworthiness) even if they are highly skilled or qualified. Those that are employed in sports organizations face antagonism, hostility, and prejudice

Factors that that hamper the effective implementation of policies to ensure sexual minority groups are not discriminated against/harassed in sports

- Social attitudes have meant that there has been a reluctance even to recognize that sports participation by those whose sexual orientation is anything other than heterosexual can be problematic. Discrimination can run deep: it may be implicit through 'heteronormative' attitudes as well as explicit through homophobia and does result in self-censorship by LGBT people.
- Information gaps are substantial. Whilst non-inclusive attitudes, homophobia, and self-censorship are well-documented, they remain anecdotal – we cannot quantify how prevalent they are. We cannot even do the simple analyses – as we can for women, older people, those with a disability, or from a minority ethnic background – that would tell us to what extent LGBT people undertake different levels of sports participation.

Best practices for creating a positive climate for sexual minority groups

The power of language. Many individuals do not fit the socially constructed definitions of gender identity, sexual identity, and gender expression. Language instills and reinforces cultural values, thereby helping to maintain social hierarchies. While definitions facilitate discussion and the sharing of information, terminology remains subject to both cultural contexts and individual interpretation. The frequent use of derogatory language such as "faggot," "that's so gay," are common sources of harassment experienced by LGBTQ student-athletes. Language is powerful and has a significant impact on LGBTQ athletes. To create a more inclusive environment, athletics personnel are encouraged to respond quickly to end the use of derogatory language aimed at LGBTQ groups.

Offer a visible and supportive presence. This lets the LGBTQ community know that the institution is knowledgeable of the issues/concerns facing the LGBTQ community and stands as an ally in the fight against anti-LGBTQ bias,

It provides an environment for LGBTQ athletes and athletics personnel to feel safe and supported in acknowledging their sexual and/or gender identities.

- Support LGBTQ events in your organization (for example, National Coming out Day;

Day of Silence, LGBTQ Pride Week) by encouraging athletes and athletics personnel to attend the events. Just standing in solidarity alongside LGBTQ and allies will speak volumes with regard to your support and may encourage them to attend more athletics events. If your institution has an LGBT Resource Center, they can provide a calendar of events.
- Develop inclusive policies. Policies that explicitly welcome LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and athletics personnel- Individuals will be more likely to be open about their sexual identity or gender identity when they know that the institution is supportive.

CONCLUSION

Although heterosexism and sexual prejudice are prevalent in many sports organizations, there are other areas of sport where this is not the case, and in fact, sexual prejudice is decreasing (Anderson, 2011). This pattern has implications beyond the playing field, as sexual orientation diversity can potentially serve as a source of competitive advantage. Thus, the prejudice directed toward and exclusion of sexual minorities, in addition to being socially reprehensible (Day & Greene, 2008) is likely also serving to limit how effective these sports organizations can be.

There is a need for organizations to understand attracting employees who are LGBT to the workplace, and creating and sustaining a proactive and inclusive diversity culture. Several options exist for sports organizations seeking greater sexual orientation diversity. First, recruiters can attend LGBT-specific events and conferences, such as the annual Reaching Out MBA Conference (see www.reachingoutmba.org), in efforts to attract sexual minorities to their organization (Ho, 2006). They can also attend or sponsor LGBT-inclusive athletic events, such as the Gay Games.

References

- Anderson, E. (2011). Updating the outcome: Gay athletes, straight teams, and coming out in educationally-based sports teams. Gender & Society, 250–268.
- Day, E., & Greene, G. (2008). A case for sexual orientation diversity management in small and large organizations. Human Resource Management, 637–654.
- Ho, J. (2006, August). Attracting gay MBAs: Financial services firms are making more of an effort to recruit and keep gay employees, and activist groups are helping smooth the way. Businessweek.